

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 TRSE-00 /076 W
-----083449 191750Z /43

R 191723Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0712
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL NAHA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USNATO
CAMP BUTLER OKINAWA JAPAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 08260

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: JA, CH, UR, PVOR
SUBJECT: SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS: SENKAKU DISPUTE
AND PFT

SUMMARY: MOSCOW UNDOUBTEDLY VIEWS SENKAKU FLAREUP AS A
GODSEND AND A SIGNIFICANT SETBACK FOR CHINA'S INCREAS-
INGLY ACTIVE EFFORTS TO MOBILIZE A WORLD-WIDE ANTI-
SOVIET UNITED FRONT. SOVIET MEDIA IS GLEEFULLY HIGH-
LIGHTING STATEMENTS BY THE JAPANESE PRESS AND PUBLIC
FIGURES CONDEMNING CHINESE ARMED "INTERVENTION" IN
SENKAKU WATERS; AND OPPOSING FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THE
PFT. END SUMMARY.

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1. IN GIVING PROMINENT ATTENTION TO JAPANESE PROTESTS
AND "ALARM" AT CHINESE ATTEMPTS TO "LEGALIZE BY FORCE
ITS TERRITORIAL CLAIMS" TO THE SENKAKUS, THE SOVIET MEDIA
IS HIGHLIGHTING THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE PFT AND THE
SENKAKU DISPUTE. APRIL 18 TASS REPORT DATELINED
TOKYO AND PRINTED IN APRIL 19 PRAVDA CITES "SANKEI

SHIMBUN" AS STATING THAT THE RETURN OF ARMED CHINESE VESSELS TO SENKAKU WATERS "CONFIRMS PEKING'S HEGEMONISTIC AMBITIONS AND REQUIRES A VERY SERIOUS APPROACH TO THE WARNINGS OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE HASTE IN THE QUESTION OF RESUMING JAPANESE-CHINESE TALKS ON THE CONCLUSION OF PFT." APRIL 14 TASS ARTICLE PRINTED IN APRIL 14 IZVESTIYA AND MORE AUTHORITATIVE APRIL 15 PRAVDA COMMENTARY ALSO SELECTIVELY HIGHLIGHT PFT-SENKAKUS LINKAGE MADE BY JAPANESE PRESS AND PUBLIC FIGURES. IZVESTIYA STORY STATES THAT, ALTHOUGH BOTH SIDES AGREED TO POSTPONE SENKAKU SOLUTION UNTIL AFTER "NORMALIZATION" OF RELATIONS, "SUCH TERRITORIAL PROBLEMS BECOME INTENSIFIED INDEPENDENT OF INTENTIONS OF GOVERNMENTS." MORE IMPORTANT PRAVDA COMMENTARY:

-- HOLDS THAT THE JAPANESE PUBLIC IS DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THE CHINESE "INTRUSION" INTO SENKAKUS WATERS;

-- NOTES LDP CRITICISM OF FUKUDA AND SONODA FOR INTENDING TO RESUME PFT TALKS. COMMENTARY REFERS TO JAPANESE PRESS REPORTS ON LDP POLL SHOWING PLURALITY OF LDP MPS FAVORING CAUTION ON PFT, AND CITES "ASAHI" AS HOLDING THAT FEELING THAT PFT TALKS "MAY DO HARM TO JAPANESE-SOVIET RELATIONS" IS THE MAIN REASON FOR THIS CAUTION AMONG LDP POLITICIANS;

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-- CITES "LOCAL POLITICAL OBSERVERS" AS BELIEVING THAT LDP DIVISION REFLECTS A SIMILAR DIVISION AMONG THE JAPANESE PUBLIC. COMMENTARY CONCLUDES THAT THIS DIVISION "MAY SERIOUSLY INFLUENCE THE POLICY OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IN THE FUTURE."

2. APRIL 14 TASS ARTICLE DATELINED TOKYO AND PRINTED IN KRASNAYA ZVEZDA REPEATS STATEMENTS BY JAPANESE PRESS AND POLITICIANS ADVOCATING CAUTION ON PFT WHILE CRITICIZING PROPONENTS OF EARLY PFT SIGNING. ARTICLE CITES JAPANESE PRESS REPORTS CHARGING THAT NATIONAL DEFENSE AGENCY HEAD KANEMARU IS URGING BOTH PFT SIGNING AND STRENGTHENING OF U.S.-JAPANESE MILITARY ALLIANCE WHILE ARGUING THAT PFT SIGNING WILL INCREASE U.S. "GOOD WILL" TOWARD JAPAN. TASS ARTICLE THEN CITES DEPUTY ASST SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DUNCAN AS INDICATING AT RECENT PRESS CONFERENCE IN JAPAN THAT U.S. WOULD "WELCOME" PFT SIGNING.

3. IN RECENT DISCUSSION ON SENKAKU FLAREUP, JAPANESE EMBOFF HERE JOKED THAT SOVIET PRESS NEED NO LONGER DISTORT JAPANESE PRESS AND PUBLIC OUTLOOK ON PFT SINCE

THERE IS NOW AMPLE EVIDENCE ILLUSTRATING JAPANESE
OPPOSITION TO PFT. HE SAID THAT THE SENKAKU FLAREUP
COULD DAMAGE SONODA'S POSITION. FUKUDA HAS BEEN
UNHAPPY WITH AND OCCASIONALLY EMBARRASSED BY SONODA'S
EFFORTS TO PUBLICIZE MOVEMENT ON THE PFT AND HIS
PLANNED TRIPS TO PEKING. SONODA, SOURCE CLAIMED,
PERHAPS WANTED TO COMPLETE PFT SIGNING TO MAKE A MARK
BEFORE EXPECTED CABINET CHANGES TOWARDS THE END OF
THE YEAR. SOURCE THOUGHT THAT IT IS NOW VERY LIKELY
THAT SONODA COULD LOSE THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WHEN THE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 08260

RESHUFFLE TAKES PLACE.

4. COMMENT: SENKAKU ISLAND FLAREUP IS AN
UNEXPECTED "GIFT" FOR MOSCOW. IN CONTRAST TO SOVIET
PUBLIC POSTURE, SOVIETS IN PRIVATE OVER THE PAST TWO
MONTHS HAVE SEEMED INCREASINGLY RESIGNED TO PFT SIGNING.
SOVIETS WILL READ SETBACK IN PFT PROCESS AS A SETBACK
TO CHINESE EFFORTS TO ORCHESTRATE WORLD-WIDE, ANTI-
SOVIET FRONT AND TO DRAW JAPAN CLOSER TO PEKING -
ALTHOUGH SOVIETS ARE PROBABLY WAITING TO SEE THE OUTCOME

OF THIS INCIDENT BEFORE FINALLY ASSESSING THE DEGREE
OF THE SETBACK. SOVIETS HAVE TOLD US THAT THE RECENT
PRC-EC TRADE AGREEMENT WAS A MINOR POLITICAL SUCCESS
FOR CHINESE ANTI-SOVIET POLICY AIMS. AOKYO'S
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ACQUIESCENCE TO THE SINO-JAPANESE PFT WITH THE ANTI-
SOVIET HEGEMONY CLAUSE, COMING ON THE HEELS OF THE
RECENTLY SIGNED LONG-TERM SINO-JAPANESE TRADE AGREE-
MENT, WOULD HAVE BEEN INTERPRETED BY MOSCOW AS ANOTHER
AND MORE SIGNIFICANT SUCCESS. EVEN THOUGH IT LOOKS
LIKE THE SOVIETS NEED NOT FEAR A PFT SIGNING IN THE
NEAR FUTURE, THERE IS NO LIKELYHOOD THIS WILL CAUSE
THEM TO RELAX THEIR CRITICISM OF PFT AND ITS PROPONENTS
IN JAPAN. TOON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTES, INTERVENTION, FOREIGN RELATIONS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOSCOW08260
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780167-1152
Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780440/aaaabhry.tel
Line Count: 189
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b6858bab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2919996
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS: SENKAKU DISPUTE AND PFT SUMMARY: MOSCOW UNDOUBTEDLY VIEWS SENKAKU FLAREUP
TAGS: PFOR, PEPR, JA, CH, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b6858bab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014